

# Examining the Attitudes Towards Mobile Advertising Messages: A Field Research on Turkish Consumers

Fatih Geçti

Yalova University, Yalova, Turkey

Niyazi Gümüş

Kastamonu University, Kastamonu, Turkey

The purpose of this study is to examine consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. In order to achieve this purpose, a survey was conducted on consumers in Yalova and Kastamonu cities of Turkey. Empirical findings show that informativeness, permission advertising, boredom, word of mouth communication, affection, and reliability are determined as the main factors that explain the consumers' attitudes towards these messages. Additionally, some of these factors vary with some demographic variables. The findings provide insights for both academics and practitioners working on this area.

*Keywords:* mobile advertising message, consumer attitude, Turkish consumers

## Introduction

The competition among companies has been shifted from local to global with the globalization that quick development caused at communication technology. Companies have been using the last technology and marketing applications to reach the consumers. One of the last communication tools that has been used by companies is mobile devices which almost everybody has. Companies try to direct the consumers towards their own products and brands with the advertising messages. With the new developments in mobile communication, mobile devices have become significant gadgets enabling marketing experts to communicate with their customers one to one. Radio, television, newspaper, and magazines are among the traditional advertisement tools and these tools have important restrictions on some issues such as timing, location, size, and customization of the advertisement (Park, Shenoy, & Salvendy, 2008). On the other hand, mobile advertising obtains the ease and advantages to determine the target group, to adjust the content of the message with regards to the choice of customers and to communicate with the users. When the traditional advertising areas are compared with the mobile advertising, it can be observed that mobile advertising enables personalization and interaction. Marketing experts can easily locate the customer in any time period via mobile advertising tools, thus, the message, intended only for that customer, can be delivered directly to him/her. Constant mobility, personalization, and space advantages enable mobile phones to be a tool for mobile advertising applications. Mobile advertisements can be adjusted to the location, time, and personal preferences of customers and then sent

---

Fatih Geçti, Ph.D., Lecturer, Department of Management, Yalova University.

Niyazi Gümüş, Lecturer, Accounting and Tax Programme, Kastamonu University.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Fatih Geçti, Yalova University, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Department of Management, Safran Campus, 77100, Yalova, Turkey. E-mail: fgecti@yalova.edu.tr.

to them (Kurkovsky & Harihar, 2006). Mobile ads provide enterprises to communicate with their customers without time and location constraints. Mobile phones and personal digital assistants increase the availability, frequency, and speed of communication. The technology associated with these devices, which let marketers personally communicate with consumers, continues to evolve (Scharl, Dickinger, & Murphy, 2005). Using of the mobile devices as advertisement facilities by marketing experts has just been a new application. That is why it should not forget the applications which have been occurred by mobile devices are based on traditional marketing. Furthermore it is thought that mobile devices will give peculiar applications a show by developing fast (Huang & Symonds, 2009).

The purpose of this study is to examine consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. In this context, a field research on consumers using mobile phones in two different cities of Turkey was conducted. The paper is organized as follows: A brief literature review on mobile advertising is provided; then, the research methodology is described; finally, the findings of current research are demonstrated.

### **A Brief Literature Review on Mobile Advertising**

Mobile advertising is defined as a form of advertising that is communicated to the consumer/target via a handset (Mobile Marketing Association, 2011). In the literature, there are vast majority of publications concerning mobile advertising and related fields. Researches examining the issue of mobile advertising in different streams are generally scattered across various publications especially marketing and information technology journals.

Since the first mobile advertising in the form of text messaging appeared in Finland in 1997, text-based mobile advertising has become almost ubiquitous in Europe and Asia. SMS ads mix one-to-many mass communication and point-to-point interpersonal communication (Wei, Xiaoming, & Pan, 2009). As mobile technology continues to diffuse, the numbers of mobile subscribers continue to grow. The mobile phone and network is promptly becoming a feasible marketing channel as mobile phones facilitate the exposure to advertisements deliver through a variety of mobile technologies (Koury & Yang, 2010). Dickinger et al. (2004) discussed SMS which belong to the first and one of the most successful forms of mobile data transmission. Bamba and Barnes (2007) examined the phenomenon of consumers' willingness to give permission to SMS advertisement and found that consumers' perception of SMS ads were rather negative. Okazaki and Taylor (2008) examined the factors associated with the intention of multinational corporations operating in Europe to implement SMS advertising.

Mafe, Blas, and Mesias (2010) analyzed the key drivers of consumer acceptance of SMS to participate in television programmes in different countries. According to their findings, while perceived value, attitude, and affinity towards television programmes determined SMS acceptance to participate in television programmes in Spain, subjective norm, perceived value, and attitude were the key drivers of SMS acceptance in Colombia.

A research about the contents of advertising conducted in London with a thousand mobile phone user reaches to a conclusion indicating that a good mobile advertising message, according to the level of significance, should be short and relevant with its aim, entertaining, adequate for the target group, appealing, informative in terms of rewarding and publicity (Scharl et al., 2005). Okazaki (2008) focused on the role of trust in mobile advertising acceptance and found that trust in mobile advertising and in brand both directly and positively affect attitude towards the ad, which in turn determine attitude towards the brand. Merisavo et al. (2007) examined the drivers of consumer acceptance of SMS based mobile advertising and found that utility

and context were the strongest positive drivers of consumer acceptance of mobile advertising. According to a research in New Zealand, permission, content of the message, control of the supplier on message, the distribution time, and density of messages were found importantly effective on the acceptance of mobile advertising (Usta, 2009). Leppaniemi, Karjaluoto, and Salo (2004) mentioned about the success factors of mobile advertising value chain and developed 5C model (content, cross-media marketing, campaign management, customer database, and carrier cooperation) describing the critical success factor of mobile advertising value chain. Tanveer, Azam, and Panikar (2007) presented an enabling advertising technology that uses wireless medium for transmitting content. Tahtinen (2005) found a term that covers the essential elements of mobile commercial communication. Haghirian, Madlberger, and Tanuskova (2005) investigated the relevance of mobile advertising value and found that the message content was of greatest relevance for the perceived advertising value, while a high frequency of message exposure had a negative impact on it. A research conducted on mobile phone users in Europe, the US and India found that 78% of the users were happy with getting mobile advertising messages they were interested in (Xu, Liao, & Li, 2007).

### Research Methodology

The current study has descriptive character and aims at examining the consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. In order to achieve the goal of the study, a survey was carried out in two cities of Turkey. In this regard, all consumers using mobile devices and living in Kastamonu and Yalova constituted the population. Taking into account financial and time constraints, 402 consumers were selected through convenience sampling method. The data were collected with structured questionnaire and the survey was conducted face to face. The statements in the questionnaire were adapted from the literature. Questionnaire form consists of two sections. In the first section, there are questions related to the demographic characteristics of the sample. The second section includes the statements about the consumer' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. The research questions of this study are as follows:

- What are the factors affecting consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages?
- Do factors affecting consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages vary with the demographic features?

The data were analyzed via SPSS 20 program.

### Findings

#### Profile of the Respondents

The demographic features of the respondents are given in Table 1.

Table 1

#### *Demographic Features*

|                | <i>n</i> | <i>%</i> |                 | <i>n</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------------|----------|----------|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Gender         |          |          | Education level |          |          |
| Male           | 205      | 51       | Primary school  | 41       | 10.2     |
| Female         | 197      | 49       | High school     | 157      | 39.1     |
| Marital status |          |          | College         | 55       | 13.7     |
| Married        | 153      | 38.1     | University      | 108      | 26.9     |
| Single         | 249      | 69.9     | Post graduate   | 41       | 10.2     |

(Table 1 continued)

|                             | <i>n</i> | %    |                         | <i>n</i> | %    |
|-----------------------------|----------|------|-------------------------|----------|------|
| Age                         |          |      | Occupation              |          |      |
| 18-25                       | 218      | 54.2 | Worker                  | 24       | 6    |
| 26-35                       | 111      | 27.6 | Civil servant           | 85       | 21.1 |
| 36-45                       | 41       | 10.2 | Retired                 | 18       | 4.5  |
| 46-55                       | 24       | 6    | House wife              | 15       | 3.7  |
| 56 +                        | 8        | 2    | Student                 | 140      | 34.8 |
| Monthly income              |          |      | Self employment         | 24       | 6    |
| Below 500 Turkish Lira (TL) | 128      | 31.8 | Unemployed              | 43       | 10.7 |
| 500-1,000 TL                | 114      | 28.4 | Private sector employee | 53       | 13.2 |
| 1,001-1,500 TL              | 83       | 20.6 | City                    |          |      |
| 1,501-2,000 TL              | 59       | 14.7 | Kastamonu               | 185      | 46   |
| Over 2,001 TL               | 18       | 4.5  | Yalova                  | 217      | 54   |

According to Table 1, 51% of total respondents were male, 38.1% were single, 81.8% were under 35 years old, 60.2% had up to 1,000 TL montly income, 39.1% had high school degree, 34.8% were students. In terms of residence, 54% of total respondents were consumers in Yalova and 46% were consumers in Kastamonu.

### Determining the Factors Affecting Consumers' Attitudes Toward Mobile Advertising Messages

Factor analysis was conducted in order to determine the respondents' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. According to the result of the analysis, the sample was sufficient ( $KMO = 0.88$ ) and data were distributed normally (Bartlett test:  $p > 0.000$ ). The result of factor analysis is shown in Table 2. According to the results, six factors were determined to explain the respondents' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. These factors are: informativeness, permission advertising, boredom, word of mouth communication, affection, and reliability. Total variance explanation rate of these six factors is 0.80. It means that 80% of the respondents' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages are explained by these six factors and with the rest occurs by affecting of other factors. These six factors were named after reviewing the past studies in the literature.

Table 2

#### Result of Factor Analysis

| Factors/Items  | Factors loads    | Variance explained |
|--|------------------|--------------------|
| Informativeness  | $\alpha = 0.879$ |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages provide useful informations about products and campaigns.              | 0.809            | 0.165              |
| Mobile advertising messages are good resources in order to provide information on time.            | 0.799            |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages are useful information resources.                                      | 0.781            |                    |
| Permission advertising   | $\alpha = 0.843$ |                    |
| I trust the mobile advertising messages that are sent by getting permission.                       | 0.798            | 0.157              |
| I carefully read mobile advertising messages that are sent by getting permission from me.          | 0.783            |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages that are sent by getting permission from me affect my buying behavior. | 0.706            |                    |
|  |                  |                    |
| Boredom  | $\alpha = 0.846$ |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages annoy me.  | 0.913            | 0.144              |
| Mobile advertising messages upset the people.  | 0.880            |                    |
| Reading the mobile advertising messages is a waste of time.  | 0.824            |                    |

(Table 2 continued)

| Factors/Items  | Factors loads | Variance explained |
|--|---------------|--------------------|
| Word of mouth communication $\alpha = 0.908$   |               |                    |
| I share the mobile advertising messages concerning the campaigns with the people in my environment           | 0.890         |                    |
| I share the mobile advertising messages concerning the discounted products with the people in my environment | 0.884         | 0.130              |
| Affection $\alpha = 0.833$   |               |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages including my area of interest affect my buying behavior.                         | 0.765         |                    |
| Mobile advertising messages affect my buying behavior.   | 0.719         |                    |
| I think that mobile advertising messages coming to my mobile phone contain useful informations               | 0.442         | 0.112              |
| Reliability $\alpha = 0.689$   |               |                    |
| I trust mobile advertising messages  | 0.793         |                    |
| I admit mobile advertising messages as a good reference for shopping.  | 0.609         | 0.092              |
| Total variance explained   |               | 0.80               |

Factor means are shown in the Table 3.

Table 3

*Factor Means*

| Factors                     | Means |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Informativeness             | 3.48  |
| Permission Advertising      | 3.61  |
| Boredom                     | 3.08  |
| Word of Mouth Communication | 3.53  |
| Affection                   | 3.44  |
| Reliability                 | 3.22  |

Note. 1—Strongly disagree to 5—Strongly agree.

According to Table 3, it is possible to mention that permission advertising is relatively crucial factor for consumers. Respondents will probably accept the messages which they are interested in. Another important point is word of mouth communication. Word of mouth communication, which has a big importance on consumers' decisions, can be made through interesting advertising messages. Thus, companies will be able to reach many consumers through word of mouth communication.

### Examining the Factors Affecting Consumers' Attitudes Towards Mobile Advertising Messages in Terms of Demographic Variables

*t*-test analysis was conducted for determining whether there were significant differences between the consumers in Kastamonu and Yalova. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4

*Result of t-test*

| Factors                     | Cities           | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | St. Deviation |
|-----------------------------|------------------|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| Informativeness             | Kastamonu Yalova | 4.885    | 400       | 0.000    | 0.097         |
| Permission advertising      | Kastamonu Yalova | 2.527    | 400       | 0.012    | 0.099         |
| Boredom                     | Kastamonu Yalova | 3.758    | 400       | 0.000    | 0.098         |
| Word of mouth communication | Kastamonu Yalova | 0.819    | 400       | 0.413    | 0.100         |
| Affection                   | Kastamonu Yalova | 0.046    | 400       | 0.964    | 0.100         |
| Reliability                 | Kastamonu Yalova | 3.015    | 400       | 0.003    | 0.099         |

Note.  $p < 0.05$ .

According to Table 4, there were significant differences between the consumers in Kastamonu and Yalova in terms of informativeness, permission advertising, boredom, and reliability factors. Anova analysis was conducted to test the relationship between demographic features (age groups, education levels, income levels, and occupations) and the factors affecting consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

*Results of Anova Test*

| Factors                     | Demographic variables |            |                  |            |                |            |                |            |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|------------|----------------|------------|
|                             | Age groups            |            | Education levels |            | Income levels  |            | Occupations    |            |
|                             | <i>F</i> value        | Sig. value | <i>F</i> value   | Sig. value | <i>F</i> value | Sig. value | <i>F</i> value | Sig. value |
| Informativeness             | 0.340                 | 0.851      | 0.978            | 0.419      | 1.111          | 0.351      | 0.938          | 0.477      |
| Permission advertising      | 0.830                 | 0.507      | 2.047            | 0.087      | 1.064          | 0.374      | 2.837          | 0.007      |
| Boredom                     | 0.835                 | 0.504      | 6.217            | 0.000      | 2.443          | 0.046      | 3.267          | 0.002      |
| Word of mouth communication | 0.676                 | 0.609      | 6.669            | 0.000      | 6.536          | 0.000      | 3.045          | 0.004      |
| Affection                   | 1.455                 | 0.215      | 1.672            | 0.156      | 0.937          | 0.442      | 0.657          | 0.708      |
| Reliability                 | 2.102                 | 0.080      | 2.330            | 0.055      | 1.003          | 0.406      | 0.865          | 0.535      |

Note.  $p < 0.05$ .

Significant differences were found among the respondents from different education levels in terms of boredom and word of mouth communication factors. Besides, there were significant differences between the different occupation groups in terms of permission advertising, boredom, and word of mouth communication factors. Moreover, significant differences were also found among the respondents from different income level groups in terms of boredom and word of mouth communication factors.

### Conclusions

In this study, the factors that explain the consumers' attitudes towards mobile advertising messages were examined. There also investigated whether these factors differ in terms of demographic variables. Six main factors (informativeness, permission advertising, boredom, word of mouth communication, affection, and reliability) were determined to explain consumers' attitudes towards these messages. Significant differences were found between the consumers in two cities in terms of informativeness, permission advertising, boredom, and reliability factors. Additionally, while boredom and word of mouth communication factors vary with education levels, permission advertising and word of mouth communication factors vary with different occupations. Moreover, significant differences were found among the consumers from different income level groups in terms of boredom and word of mouth communication factors.

It is estimated that revenues of the mobile advertising market will increase every year by multitude and it will be a good income for mobile phone operators. Marketers must notice consumers' preferences and differences that can be come out in their tastes about goods and services in the future. It is unavoidable that mobile advertising messages are some parts of marketing strategy especially for local scale firms.

### Limitations and Suggestions

This study is limited to the consumers using mobile devices in the cities of Kastamonu and Yalova in Turkey. Therefore, generalization may not be made. The convenience sampling method was used in this study.

In this context, the sample that was selected may not represent the population in a powerful way. Thus, using any probability sampling method with a larger sample size in further studies will naturally raise the value of the researches.

## References

- Bamba, F., & Barnes, S. J. (2007). SMS advertising, permission and the consumer: A study. *Business Process Management Journal*, 13(6), 815-829.
- Dickinger, A., Haghiri, P., Murphy, J., & Scharl, A. (2004). An investigation and conceptual model of SMS marketing. *Proceedings of the 37th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences*, Hawaii, USA.
- Haghiri, P., Madlberger, M., & Tanuskova, A. (2005). Increasing advertising value of mobile marketing—An empirical study of antecedents. *Proceedings of the 38th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (pp. 1-10). Hawaii, USA. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1109/HICSS.2005.311>
- Huang, R. Y., & Symonds, J. (2009). Mobile marketing evolution: Systematic literature review on multi-channel communication and multi-characteristics campaign. *Proceedings of the Enterprise Distributed Object Computing Conference Workshops, 2009, EDOCW 2009* (pp. 157-165). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1109/EDOCW.2009.5332001>
- Koury, S. S., & Yang, K. C. C. (2010). Factors affecting consumers' responses to mobile advertising from a social norm theoretical perspective. *Telematics and Informatics*, 27, 103-113.
- Kurkovsky, S., & Harihar, K. (2006). Using ubiquitous computing in interactive mobile marketing. *Pers Ubiquit Comput*, 10, 227-240.
- Leppaniemi, M., Karjalainen, H., & Salo, J. (2004). The success factors of mobile advertising value chain. *E-Business Review*, 4, 93-97.
- Mafe, C. R., Blas, S. S., & Mesias, J. F. T. (2010). A comparative study of mobile messaging services acceptance to participate in television programmes. *Journal of Service Management*, 21(1), 69-102.
- Merisavo, M., Kajalo, S., Karjalainen, H., Virtanen, V., Salmenkivi, S., Raulas, M., & Leppaniemi, M. (2007). An empirical study of the drivers of consumer acceptance of mobile advertising. *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, 7(2), 1-18.
- Mobile Marketing Association. (2011). *MMA updates definition of mobile marketing*. Retrieved from <http://mma.global.com/news/mma-updates-definition-mobile-marketing>
- Okazaki, S. (2008). *Assessing the effects of trust on mobile advertising campaign: The Japanese case: Trust and new technologies-marketing and management on the internet mobile media*. UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Okazaki, S., & Taylor, C. R. (2008). What is SMS advertising and why do multinationals adopt it? Answers from an empirical study in European markets. *Journal of Business Research*, 61, 4-12.
- Park, T., Shenoy, R., & Salvendy, G. (2008). Effective advertising on mobile phones: A literature review and presentation of results from 53 case studies. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 27(5), 355-373.
- Scharl, A., Dickinger, A., & Murphy, J. (2005). Diffusion and success factors of mobile marketing. *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications*, 4(2), 159-173.
- Tahtinen, J. (2005). Mobile advertising or mobile marketing—A need for a new concept. *Frontiers of e-Business Research Conference Proceedings of eBRF* (pp. 152-164).
- Tanveer, S., Azam, F., & Panikar, A. (2007). Mobile advertising: A revolutionary method of business to consumer (B2C) communication for promoting m-governance. *ICEG 2007-Hyderabad*. Retrieved from [http://www.csi-sigegov.org/3/40\\_370\\_3n.pdf](http://www.csi-sigegov.org/3/40_370_3n.pdf)
- Usta, R. (2009). Üniversite öğrencilerinin mobil reklâmcılığa karşı tutumları. *Doğuş Üniversitesi Dergisi*, 10(2), 294-309.
- Wei, R., Xiaoming, H., & Pan, J. (2009). Examining user behavioral response to SMS ads: Implications for the evolution of the mobile phone as a bona-fide museum. *Telematics and Informatics*, 27, 32-41.
- Xu, D. J., Liao, S. S., & Li, Q. (2007). Combining empirical experimentation and modeling techniques: A design research approach for personalized mobile advertising applications. *Decision Support Systems*, 44, 710-724.